

CLAIMS LISTING

1-11. (Cancelled)

Claim 12. (Currently amended) In combination, an RFID tag configured to receive, record, store and make available for subsequent electronic transmission information relating to an instrument to be washed, disinfected or sterilized or to a container configured to receive said instrument, and a seal configured to fit between a tray and a lid of said container to tightly close said container, wherein said tag is in said seal ~~and said seal has a lifetime of a plurality of cycles of said container.~~

Claim 13. (Previously presented) An RFID tag according to claim 12 wherein said information comprises at least one of the following:

the model number of said instrument or container,
the lot number of said instrument or container,
the serial number of said instrument or container,
the type of process to which said instrument or container has been subjected,
the date and time of one or more processes to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the status of a process to which said instrument or said container is subjected during such process,

the number of processes to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the identify of an operator initiating or responsible for a sterilizing or disinfecting process to which said instrument or container has been subjected,

the service history, owner, or location of said container,

the revision number of said instrument or container,

the part number of said instrument or container,

the reorder number of said instrument or container,

the expected life of said instrument or container,

the date of manufacture of said instrument or container,

the date of installation of said instrument or container,

the date of first use of said instrument or container, or

the electronic product code (EPC) of said instrument or container.

Claim 14. (Previously presented) A combination according to claim 12 in combination with said container for a plurality of said instruments.

Claim 15. (Cancelled)

Claim 16. (Cancelled)

Claim 17. (Cancelled)

Claim 18. (Currently amended) A combination according to claim [[17]] 12 wherein said tag is capable of accumulating the number of washing, sterilizing or disinfecting procedures in which said seal has been used.

Claim 19. (Previously presented) A combination according to claim 12 in combination with apparatus for sensing and indicating a washing, sterilization or disinfection process to which an instrument has been subjected comprising:

a power supply,

a switch for determining when a predetermined temperature and/or pressure condition has been reached and for activating said power supply in response thereto,

a sensor for detecting sterilization or disinfection temperature and/or pressure conditions at a contact point, and

a central processing unit for processing the information from the sensors and writing said information to said RFID tag for subsequent retrieval.

Claim 20. (Previously presented) A method for sealing a sterilizing cassette and for monitoring the contents of the cassette comprising the steps of:

providing a sterilizing cassette having a tray portion and a lid portion, said cassette being configured to receive a seal between said tray portion and said lid portion,

placing a seal in said cassette between said tray portion and said lid portion, wherein said seal includes an RFID tag capable of recording the content of said cassette and the number of cycles to which the cassette has been subjected.